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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
09/966,611	09/27/2001	Eduardo Chi Sing	034298-121	7377

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[REDACTED] EXAMINER

TRINH, HOA B

ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
2814	

DATE MAILED: 08/21/2002

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

09/966,611

Applicant(s)

SING ET AL.

Examiner

Vikki H Trinh

Art Unit

2814

*-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --***Period for Reply**

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133).
- Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) Responsive to communication(s) filed on 10 June 2002.
- 2a) This action is FINAL. 2b) This action is non-final.
- 3) Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) Claim(s) 7-11 and 14-27 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) Claim(s) 7-11 and 14-27 is/are rejected.
- 7) Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) accepted or b) objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
- 11) The proposed drawing correction filed on _____ is: a) approved b) disapproved by the Examiner.
If approved, corrected drawings are required in reply to this Office action.
- 12) The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 119 and 120

- 13) Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) All b) Some * c) None of:
1. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 3. Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).
- * See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.
- 14) Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(e) (to a provisional application).
- a) The translation of the foreign language provisional application has been received.
- 15) Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 120 and/or 121.

Attachment(s)

- 1) Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) 4) Interview Summary (PTO-413) Paper No(s). _____ .
- 2) Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) 5) Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
- 3) Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449) Paper No(s) 3. 6) Other: _____ .

DETAILED ACTION

Double Patenting

1. The nonstatutory double patenting rejection is based on a judicially created doctrine grounded in public policy (a policy reflected in the statute) so as to prevent the unjustified or improper timewise extension of the "right to exclude" granted by a patent and to prevent possible harassment by multiple assignees. See *In re Goodman*, 11 F.3d 1046, 29 USPQ2d 2010 (Fed. Cir. 1993); *In re Longi*, 759 F.2d 887, 225 USPQ 645 (Fed. Cir. 1985); *In re Van Ornum*, 686 F.2d 937, 214 USPQ 761 (CCPA 1982); *In re Vogel*, 422 F.2d 438, 164 USPQ 619 (CCPA 1970); and, *In re Thorington*, 418 F.2d 528, 163 USPQ 644 (CCPA 1969).

A timely filed terminal disclaimer in compliance with 37 CFR 1.321(c) may be used to overcome an actual or provisional rejection based on a nonstatutory double patenting ground provided the conflicting application or patent is shown to be commonly owned with this application. See 37 CFR 1.130(b).

Effective January 1, 1994, a registered attorney or agent of record may sign a terminal disclaimer. A terminal disclaimer signed by the assignee must fully comply with 37 CFR 3.73(b).

2. Claims 7-11, 14-27 are rejected under the judicially created doctrine of obviousness-type double patenting as being unpatentable over claims 1-30 of U. S. Patent No. 6,183,497. Although the conflicting claims are not identical, they are not patentably distinct from each other because the claims of the patent are essentially the same as those in the present application.

3. Claims 7-11, 14-27 are rejected under the judicially created doctrine of obviousness-type double patenting as being unpatentable over claims 1-30 of U. S. Patent No. 6,183,497. Although the conflicting claims are not identical, they are not patentably distinct from each other because the claims of the patent are essentially the same as those in the present application.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless -

(b) the invention was patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country or in public use or on sale in this country, more than one year prior to the date of application for patent in the United States.

Claim 7 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Riley et al., "Percutaneous Liver Biopsy..." (Referred to hereinafter as Riley et al.), or Chuang et al., "Sheath Needle of Liver Biopsy in High-Risk Patient" (Referred to hereinafter as Chuang et al.).

Both Riley et al. and Chuang et al. each teach a method for performing a biopsy comprising the steps of:

Removing tissue from a vascular tissue site; and

Positioning an absorbable sponge (gelfoam) material includes a contrasting agent.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

1. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

2. The factual inquiries set forth in Graham v. John Deere Co., 383 U.S. 1, 148 USPQ 459 (1966), that are applied for establishing a background for determining obviousness under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) are summarized as follows:

1. Determining the scope and contents of the prior art.
2. Ascertaining the differences between the prior art and the claims at issue.
3. Resolving the level of ordinary skill in the pertinent art.

4. Considering objective evidence present in the application indicating obviousness or nonobviousness.

Claims 8-11, 14-27 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Riley et al., "Percutaneous Liver Biopsy..." (Referred to hereinafter as Riley et al.), or Chuang et al., "Sheath Needle of Liver Biopsy in High-Risk Patient" (Referred to hereinafter as Chuang et al.) in view Daniels (4,708,718).

Both Riley et al. and Chuang et al. teach a method for performing a biopsy substantially as claimed. However, Riley et al. and Chuang et al. '718 do not explicitly state whether the agent is water soluble or insoluble and the type of materials thereof.

Daniels teaches in column 5, lines 41-62, a contrasting agent, wherein the agent may be water soluble (i.e. iopamidol, metrizamide) or water insoluble (i.e. tantalum, barium sulfate).

Therefore, it would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made, in view of Daniels, to construct a contrasting agent of either Riley et al. or Chuang et al. with the agent, as taught by Daniels, so that the agent can be made with either soluble material or insoluble material.

The courts have concluded that there is no requirement that a motivation to make the modification be expressly articulated. The test for combining references is what the combination of disclosures taken as a whole would suggest to one of ordinary skill in the art. In re McLaughlin, 170 USPQ 209 (CCPA 1971). Also, references are evaluated by what they suggest to one versed in the art, rather than by their specific disclosures. In re Bozek, 163 USPQ 545 (CCPA 1969).

Art Unit: 2814

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Vikki H Trinh whose telephone number is 703-308-8238. The examiner can normally be reached on Mon.-Tues., Thurs.-Fri. from 7:30-6:00PM.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Olik Chaudhuri can be reached on 703-306-2794. The fax phone numbers for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned are 703-308-7722 for regular communications and 703-308-7722 for After Final communications.

Any inquiry of a general nature or relating to the status of this application or proceeding should be directed to the receptionist whose telephone number is 703-308-0956.



Vikki Trinh
August 13, 2002